

Introduction

The following is an evaluation of the Demonstration Program for Innovative Housing Design, established in 1998 to test housing concepts that could diversify Seattle's housing and provide alternatives to living in a conventional house, condominium, or apartment. The Demonstration Program allowed flexibility for development not currently allowed under existing regulations, while remaining consistent with the City's land use, housing, and neighborhood goals. The Program primarily demonstrated traditional types of smaller-scale housing that historically are present in many Seattle neighborhoods - cottage housing, detached accessory dwelling units (ADUs), or smaller single-family houses on small lots, that are not permitted under current zoning. The program used a competitive selection process, and required all selected projects to go through Design Review.

The primary purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether these housing types are appropriate to allow in single family zones throughout Seattle, and what development standards are appropriate to allow them. The evaluation will also help to determine what the best review process may be for allowing these housing types. This post-program evaluation is an essential element of the original 1998 Demonstration Program for Innovative Housing Design ordinance (#119241). The ordinance posed a number of questions to be answered by DCLU at the Program's completion. A combination of neighbor surveys and comments, owner/applicant interviews, urban design analysis, staff interviews, and review of permit files have provided invaluable information and lessons learned about each project.

Note: this evaluation covers detached ADUs and cottages constructed through the Demonstration Program as of April, 2003. Evaluation of constructed height departure and small lot residential projects will take place at the end of 2003.

What were the goals of the Demonstration Program for Innovative Housing?

The goals of the Demonstration Program are to test new or more flexible regulations and processes in an effort:

- To encourage housing production, particularly types of housing that are not readily available in Seattle, or are not currently being produced.
- To stimulate innovative housing design that is consistent with the housing goals of a neighborhood, and that fits in with or improves the character of the neighborhood.
- To encourage the development of housing that will serve as a catalyst to stimulate housing production, particularly in neighborhoods where new or rehabilitated residential development has been limited.
- To serve as a model for other neighborhoods, demonstrating housing solutions that could have broader application in other neighborhoods.
- To increase the diversity of housing types and levels of affordability to meet the varied needs and goals of a neighborhood.

Source: Ordinance #119241

The Demonstration Program for Innovative Housing

What the Program Allowed

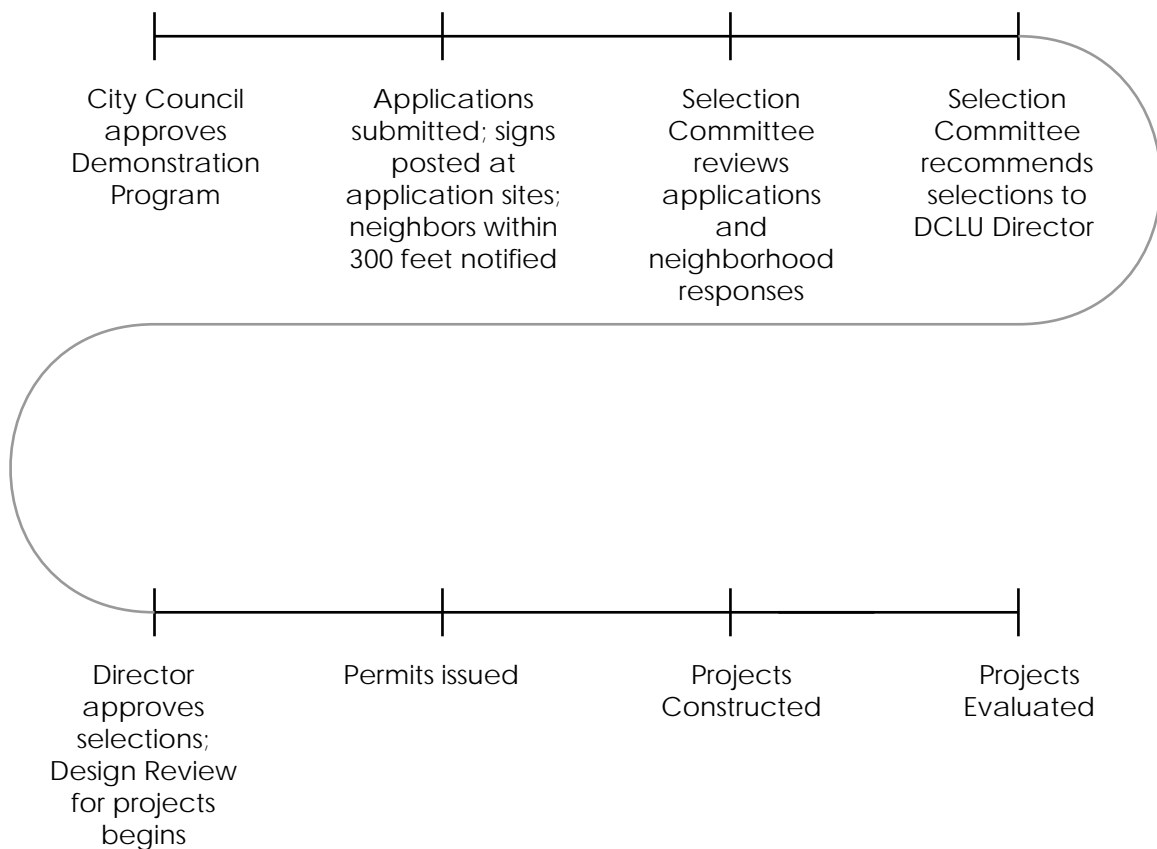
The Demonstration Program allowed applications for five types of projects: detached ADUs, cottages, cottages with carriage units, small lot single family homes, and departures for height through the Design Review program.

While allowed as part of the Demonstration Program, no applications were received for development standard departures for modifications to existing buildings.

The Program authorized a fixed number of each type of project, and under each round of selection, a limited number could be chosen to proceed through the permit process. The chart below shows the type, location, and status of projects selected under the Demonstration Program.

Status of Applications Selected for the Demonstration Program for Innovative Housing Design (as of April, 2003)

	Submittal Period	Housing Type	Address	Status
1	Jan 1999	detached ADU	3255 28th Ave W	constructed
2	Jan 1999	detached ADU	2211 Federal Ave E	constructed
3	Jan 1999	2 houses/RSL	809 23rd Ave	constructed
4	Jan 1999	height departure	1413 15th Ave	constructed
5	Jan 1999	height departure	1804 28th Ave S	constructed
6	Jan 1999	13-unit RSL	4001, 4009, 4021 31st Ave S	under construction
7	March 1999	cottage Type B	6318 5th Ave NE	constructed
8	July 1999	detached ADU	933 21st Ave E	cancelled application
9	July 1999	detached ADU	5922 42nd Ave SW	withdrawn
10	July 1999	detached ADU	8540 Interlake Ave N	constructed
11	July 1999	detached ADU	5420 Kirkwood Place N	constructed
12	June 2000	detached ADU	3410 36th Ave W	in MUP process
13	June 2000	detached ADU	4214 S Hudson	yet to apply
14	June 2000	detached ADU	8836 38th Ave SW	withdrawn
15	June 2000	cottage type B	4858 Beach Drive SW	withdrawn & reapplied
16	June 2000	cottage type A	2400 SW Roxbury	under construction
17	May 2001	detached ADU	102 NW 45th St	yet to apply
18	May 2001	detached ADU	2216 S Hinds St	under construction
19	May 2001	cottage type A	1521-1523 E Jefferson St	in MUP process
20	May 2001	cottage type A	10035 55th Ave S	yet to apply
21	May 2001	cottage type B	4858 Beach Drive SW	in MUP process



The Demonstration Program for Innovative Housing Design Process

How Projects Were Selected

The Demonstration Program ordinance allowed a total of ten detached accessory dwelling unit projects to be selected; each round allowed up to five selections, but typically only two to three were selected. The detached ADU category was by far the most popular application type received during the course of the Demonstration Program, and only the applications received in each round that best met the selection criteria became constructed projects.

Each submittal period required City Council authorization. After publishing notification of Council's approval, the Department of Design, Construction, and Land Use (DCLU) received several applications for each project type. DCLU compiled a list of interested parties

(neighbors of projects and potential applicants) for each housing type in advance of each round, and notification was sent to this list as well as being published in DCLU's monthly newsletter *dcluINFO*.

Notification of the applications were mailed to neighbors within 300 feet of a proposed site, and a sign was placed on the site itself. This initiated a two-week period, during which neighbors were allowed to comment on the proposal via telephone, email, or postal mail. In application materials, DCLU encouraged applicants to discuss their proposals with as many neighbors as possible prior to applying for the program.

During the comment period, applications were reviewed by a selection committee, which included two members of the Seattle Plan-

ning Commission, other non-City design and planning professionals, and DCLU's Senior Urban Designer, who would later help provide guidance to projects in the Design Review process. The selection committee reviewed each application for how well it met the selection criteria outlined in the Demonstration Program ordinance, and then made a recommendation to the DCLU Director.

Selection criteria included:

- Goals - fulfills purpose and goals of Demonstration Program.
- City Policies - furthers goals of Comprehensive Plan and Housing Action Agenda.
- Neighborhood Goals - supports goals of neighborhood, and neighborhood plan goals when applicable.
- Neighborhood Support - receives support from neighborhood organizations and surrounding neighbors.
- Affordability - reduces unit cost, increases affordability of units, or adds to diversity of neighborhood affordability.
- Competition - rating in AIA or other competition, if applicable.
- Test Ideas - Represents a case for Future Code Amendments.

Project Review and Permitting

Once selected, each project would begin the Early Design Guidance phase of Design Review. Because of their small size, detached ADUs underwent an Administrative Design Review process, as opposed to going before the full Design Review Board like other projects.

If above the SEPA threshold, the project would also be subject to environmental review, prior to a Master Use Permit decision. Each project would then obtain a building permit before construction could begin.

Evaluating Constructed Demonstration Projects: Methodology

This evaluation will be used to inform future recommendations to amend City zoning regulations to allow alternatives to standard single family homes, townhouses, apartments, and condominiums. DCLU's evaluation reviewed the positive and negative results of the constructed projects from an urban design perspective, examining both the physical and aesthetic aspects of completed projects and the process that allowed them. The perceptions and comments from the people who live in and near them also influenced the evaluation of the Demonstration Program projects.

DCLU's evaluation included:

- An analysis of the physical form of the project relative to its surroundings;
- An analysis of the review processes and how they affected the final outcome of the projects; and
- Results of surveys mailed to neighbors of constructed projects.

Gauging Neighborhood Opinion

Currently there are eight constructed demonstration projects (nine projects remain in the permitting process or have yet to apply for a permit). In mid-August 2002, DCLU sent out several hundred questionnaires to addresses within 300 feet of a built demonstration project. A sample questionnaire can be found in the Appendix. The questionnaires helped to answer questions posed by the original Demonstration Program Ordinance.

20-30 replies were received for most projects. Two had approximately ten responses, and Ravenna Cottages generated 42 responses. The surveys asked project neighbors to rate from 1-5 (1=bad, 5=good) a project's impacts including parking, traffic, population, neighbors; and the quality of design & construction, and how well it fits into the neighborhood.

The Demonstration Program Ordinance asked "*Were there any unintended consequences that need to be resolved?*" and "*What do the neighbors think of this type of housing?*" The survey also asked recipients to comment on parking, traffic, population, and overall impact of the housing type in general. Generally the objective was to determine what those familiar with the demonstration projects thought of allowing the housing type in single family zones throughout the city, based on what they knew about the project in their neighborhood.

Survey results are presented for each project in two ways: first, the percentage of responses on impacts that are bad (1's and 2's), neutral (3's), and good (4's and 5's). The scores and method by which these percentages were derived are found in the appendix.

Second, a chart showing the average response for each question is shown for each project. It is important to note that because the chart averages the scores, it tends to not be as good of an indicator of the range of answers of what people thought the impacts were. Higher averages do indicate a better perception of impacts, however.

Overall survey results are also discussed in the conclusion of the document.